

**City Council
Work Session**

**Greenbelt Station Phase III
Site Plan – Review #2**

**8 p.m., Monday
December 7, 2015**

Council Chambers

7:40 p.m. – Advisory Group Interview

**CITY OF GREENBELT, MARYLAND
MEMORANDUM**

TO: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager *MPM*
FROM: Celia W. Craze, Planning and Community Development Director
DATE: December 3, 2015
SUBJECT: Greenbelt Station phase 3 detailed site plan review and schedule

Following Council's work session on the Greenbelt Station phase 3 detailed site plan, staff met with the applicant to review city concerns and discuss possible changes to the plan. The applicant prepared an alternative concept plan in response to Council and staff comments. This alternative concept plan addresses many of the critical issues previously reviewed with the Council.

The Prince George's County Planning Board had been scheduled to consider the phase 3 site plan on January 7, 2016. City Council consideration of the plan was scheduled for December 14 in order for city comments to be submitted to the Planning Board in advance of their hearing.

The applicant will be submitting the new alternative concept plan to M-NCPPC for official review in the next few weeks. The detailed site plan previously reviewed by Council will be withdrawn. Accordingly, Monday's work session will focus on the alternative concept plan.

Since the alternative concept plan must be officially filed with M-NCPPC, and will require their internal review, it is not possible for the plan to be considered by the Planning Board as originally scheduled. The Planning Board hearing date will be postponed several weeks. As a result of the postponement of the Planning Board hearing, it is no longer necessary for the City Council to consider the site plan at the December 14 meeting.

Staff recommends that consideration of the alternate concept plan be deferred until January 11. This is necessary because the city has not received an engineered plan, so final staff review will be delayed until that plan is submitted.

Memorandum

TO: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager *MM*
FROM: Jessica Bellah, Community Planner
VIA: Celia Craze, Director, Planning and Community Development
DATE: December 4, 2015
RE: Staff Review Greenbelt Station South Core Phase 3, DSP-13045

Background

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) referred the Greenbelt Station South Core Phase Three (3) Detailed Site Plan (DSP-13045) to the City for review and comment. As outlined in the Development Agreement, the city is afforded approval authority of detailed site plans and architectural elevations. Staff recommended opposition to the site plan based on the findings and conclusions presented in the technical staff report dated Nov. 9, 2015 and titled *Staff Review Greenbelt Station South Core Phase 3, DSP-13045*.

Council discussed staff's recommendation at the Nov. 16, 2015 work session and requested the applicant work with staff to address issues outlined in the report. Woodlawn Development Inc. (the site developer) submitted a new concept sketch for review. Staff has provided preliminary comments on the first submission and subsequent revision of this new concept design. Staff requested the applicant proceed with the development of a detailed design utilizing the new concept sketch.

Phase 3 DSP-13045 will be withdrawn and the new concept sketch will be submitted to M-NCPPC. The January 7, 2016 Planning Board hearing will be postponed, but a new hearing date has not been set.

Staff Review – New Concept Sketch

The applicant submitted a new Phase 3 concept sketch to the city on Nov. 23, 2015. Staff reviewed the sketch and provided preliminary comments and questions to the applicant. A revised concept sketch and comment response letter was received by staff on Dec. 1, 2015. The scale and level of detail shown in the submitted concept sketches does not allow for a detailed review; however, staff has prepared recommended comments and conditions for the submitted plan.

Staff Comments and Summary of Plan Changes

The new concept sketch provides for three (3) public pocket parks, a new street grid pattern, a revised lot layout and no reduction in the total number of units. The parcel of land dedicated for either public parkland or retail is now a continuous parcel between Greenbelt Station Parkway and the main private road in Phase 3 (previously known as Road A). Homes no

longer front this parcel as they did in the previous design. Staff provides the following comments:

- A. The new layout provides visual relief in the massing of buildings and provides opportunities for public use of intimate green spaces. The size and placement of the pocket parks works well.
- B. The pocket parks were achieved by reducing the individual semi-private courtyard widths from an average of 50ft between buildings to approximately 30ft. For perspective, the average garden-side width between homes in GHI range between approximately 52ft and 120ft. This is not to say that smaller courtyard widths are inappropriate for a more densely scaled site plan or that 30ft courtyard widths have not been successfully applied in urban settings. Where possible, staff encourages the applicant to increase courtyard widths and provide for a central planting strip rather than the central walk through courtyards.
- C. Several changes have been made to the street grid pattern. It is not possible to evaluate the roadway in detail at the scale represented in the concept sketches. In general:
 - There is an additional access point on Greenbelt Station Parkway from the northern end of the private interior road (Road A). To control traffic movements, staff believes this road access point should be designed as a restricted right-in/right-out point of access from Greenbelt Station Parkway.
 - Distance from the first alley intersections with Road A and the intersections of Road A with South Channel Drive and Stream Bank Lane are much improved and reduce the chance of future conflict between vehicles turning at multiple points.
 - The sketch plan does not provides road or alley width dimensions, however the applicant informs staff that Road A is set at 22ft travel width with 8ft dedicated for parking. Alley widths are set at 18ft.
- D. The new dedicated retail/public parkland parcel is continuous between Road A and Greenbelt Station Parkway. Staff believes the new site layout is better able to accommodate retail as part of Phase 3 development or as future infill development. Should the marketing period result in the identification of a tenant the site layout for this parcel will be refined. If the parcel is instead dedicated for use and public parkland, staff feels it is adequately sized and placed to accommodate a variety of public uses without detrimentally impacting adjacent properties.
- E. Staff previously expressed to the applicant that a lack of product integration is a detriment to the project. Between the first and second iteration of the concept sketch, staff requested that the developer provide significant integration of housing product types. The current sketch plan provides some integration of product types, but staff encourages the developers to pursue this further. Because they lack lengthy driveways, there is less room for the building groups of 20ft and 24ft housing products to “breathe”. The 16ft products

consist of lengthy exterior driveways which can help break up the massing of building groups and address product mix.

- F. The applicant informed staff that in order to achieve the new site layout and provide a landscaped buffer on either side of Road A, the public utility easement (PUE) in front of homes on Greenbelt Station Parkway was reduced from 10ft to 7ft and yards for these homes were also reduced. Staff requests that the applicant verify with utility companies that a 7ft PUE is sufficient. Additionally, staff will review any future landscape plan to ensure that tree plantings can be accommodated in front of homes either within the right-of-way or in front yards.

Recommended Staff Conditions

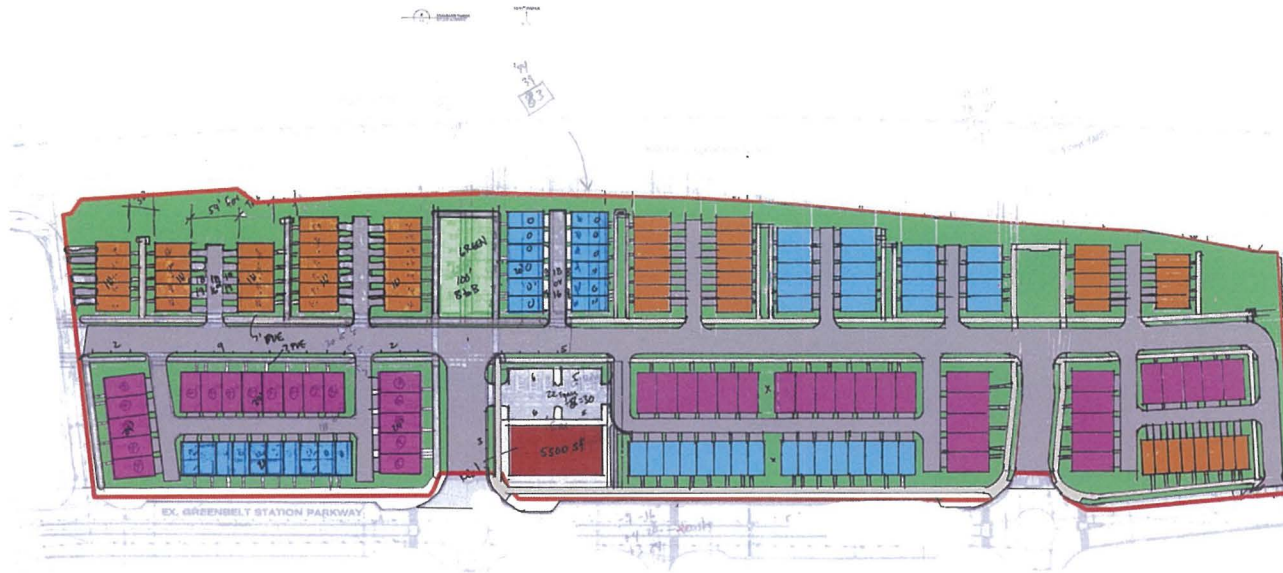
- 1) The new northern access road connecting to Greenbelt Station Parkway shall be designed as a right-in/right out connection.
- 2) Homes with frontage on Greenbelt Station Parkway shall maintain an acceptable distance between the building footprint and the nearest public walkway. This distance shall consist of, at minimum, 12ft contiguous pervious landscaped area such as grass and/or planting beds. It may include areas dedicated as PUEs. Staff requests that the applicant provide sufficient front yard area to accommodate tree planting in front yards.
- 3) Staff recommends the applicant carefully distribute and further integrate 16ft, 20ft and 24ft products throughout the development as the design is refined.
- 4) Staff recommends that the location and size of pocket parks shown in the concept plans be maintained as the design is refined. Staff encourages the applicant to thoughtfully apply landscaping in a manner that shields the sound barrier wall and maintains usable open space in the park centers.
- 5) Staff recommends that the width of courtyards between buildings be increased from 30ft to ~40ft. This should NOT be achieved by reducing the size of new public pocket parks or greatly altering their placement. Staff believes the developer could achieve greater courtyard green area through the integration of product type by utilizing their varying building and driveway depths to achieve more courtyard green space.
- 6) Staff recommends that courtyard walking paths incorporate the u-shaped walks rather than a single central walk. This design would place sidewalks closer to the houses and maintain a central green space as discussed and recommended by the Advisory Planning Board.

Summary

In general, staff is pleased with the direction of the new concept sketches submitted by the applicant for Phase 3. The revised layout addresses several primary concerns raised by staff in our report. Staff maintains our concern that the applicants address major outstanding issues such as:

- The alignment of the pedestrian overpass bridge between Greenbelt and College Park.
- The material selection, placement, and mitigation of impact for the sound barrier wall.
- Provide detail on how the NVR Build Smart program and other environmentally sensitive features of the development satisfy best practices for sustainability.
- Provide more detailed answers in response to the applicability and consideration of Development District Overlay Zone standards to the project.

GREENBELT PHASE 3 CONCEPT SCALE 1"=50'



LEGEND



COMMUNITY
GREENSPACE



5,000 SF RETAIL



24' WIDE - 46 DU



20' WIDE - 56 DU



16' WIDE - 60 DU

162 TOTAL UNITS